

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 175
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
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AMEMBASSY LISBON
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AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
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USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SP
SUBJECT: SOUTHERN EUROPEAN SOCIALIST CONFERENCE, PSOE
"FESTIVAL OF LIBERTY"

REF: MADRID 3452

1. FELIPE GONZALEZ' PSOE HOSTED THE SECOND "CONFERENCE OF SOCIALIST PARTIES OF SOUTERN EUROPE" MAY 7-8 AT A MADRID CONVENTION CENTER. AMONG THE PARTICIPANTS WERE LEADERS OF THE "CO-ORGANIZING" PSF (MITTERAND), PSI (CRAXI), PSP (SOARES), AND EVEN THE BELGIAN PSB AS WELL AS INVITED GUESTS FROM THE GREEK PASOK, YUGOSLAV SOCIALIST ALLIANCE, AND
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EXILED CHILEAN SOCIALIST GROUPS. BERNT CARLSSON REPRESENTED THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL.

2. THE MAY 7 OPENING SESSION FEATURED SPEECHES ALL AROUND, WITH THE INTERVENTION OF MARIO SOARES, WHO POINTED TO THE DIFFICULTY OF BUILDING SOCIALISM IN THE MIDST OF AN ECONOMIC CRISIS, ELICTING THE BULK OF THE PRESS COMMENTARY (WHERE

IT WAS INTERPRETED TO BE A JUSTIFICATION FOR SOARES' CLOSE TIES WITH AND ACCEPTANCE OF LARGE-SCALE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S.). GONZALEZ COMPLIMENTED SOARES RATHER EFFUSIVELY AND EMPHASIZED TO THE AUDIENCE THAT IT WAS "ONE THING TO TALK POLITICS, QUITE ANOTHER TO MAKE POLITICS." PCE SECGEN CARRILLO AND BASQUE NATIONALIST PARTY (PNV) NOTABLE JULIO JAUREGUI WERE IN THE AUDIENCE AS INVITED GUESTS.

3. IN THE EVENING, MITTERAND, SOARES AND CRAXI JOINED GONZALEZ AT THE PSOE'S UNOFFICIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF "FESTIVAL OF LIBERTY" AT A MADRID SOCCER STADIUM. A CROWD ESTIMATED TO BE AROUND 100,000 CAME AND WENT DURING THE SIX HOUR CARNIVAL-LIKE FIESTA, WHICH OFFERED EVERYTHING FROM MERRY-GO-ROUNDS AND ROCK MUSIC TO POLITICAL SPEECHES. GONZALEZ PRESENTED THE PSOE'S MADRID SLATE OF CANDIDATES, WHICH HE HEADS, AND THE VISITING SOCIALIST DIGNITARIES ADDRESSED THE THRONG. SOARES WAS HECKLED, APPARENTLY BY FAR-LEFT ELEMENTS IN THE AUDIENCE WHO CHANTED THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH OTELO. (THE BULK OF THOSE IN ATTENDANCE WERE PSOE MEMBERS OR SYMPATHIZERS, BUT THE FESTIVAL EXPECTEDLY DREW A MELANGE OF LEFT AND FAR-LEFT POLITICAL TYPES.) THERE WERE NO REPORTED DISTURBANCES, AND THE PSOE IS OBVIOUSLY JUBILANT OVER THE SUCCESS OF THE RALLY AND THE CROWD.'

4. THE CONFERENCE ITSELF CLOSED MAY 8 WITH THE READING OF VARIOUS "NON-BINDING" COMMITTEE REPORTS (REFTEL) BEFORE AN AUDIENCE OF SOME 1,500, WHICH INCLUDED INVITED GUESTS JOAQUIN SATRUSTEGUI, "DEMOCRATIC UNITY" SENATORIAL CANDIDATE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER AREILZA. AT THIS CLOSING SESSION, GONZALEZ MADE A POINT AGAIN OF PRAISING SOARES AND OF THANKING HIM FOR HIS SUPPORT OF THE PSOE, AND THE PORTUGUESE LEADER WAS GIVEN A VERY WARM SEND-OFF AS HE DEPARTED EARLY IN ORDER TO RETURN TO LISBON.

5. THE CONFERENCE-FESTIVAL TANDEM PROVIDED THE PSOE WITH PRECISELY THE ELECTORAL PUBLICITY THE PARTY DESIRED. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CONFERENCE AFTER WE HAVE SPOKEN THIS WEEK WITH PSOE LEADERS. STABLER

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